DC

DARK NIGHTS

1

BATMAN™ THE DROWNED

DARK NIGHTS METAL TIE-IN

Abnett
Tan
White

RATED T+ TEEN PLUS DCCOMICS.COM DEC 2017

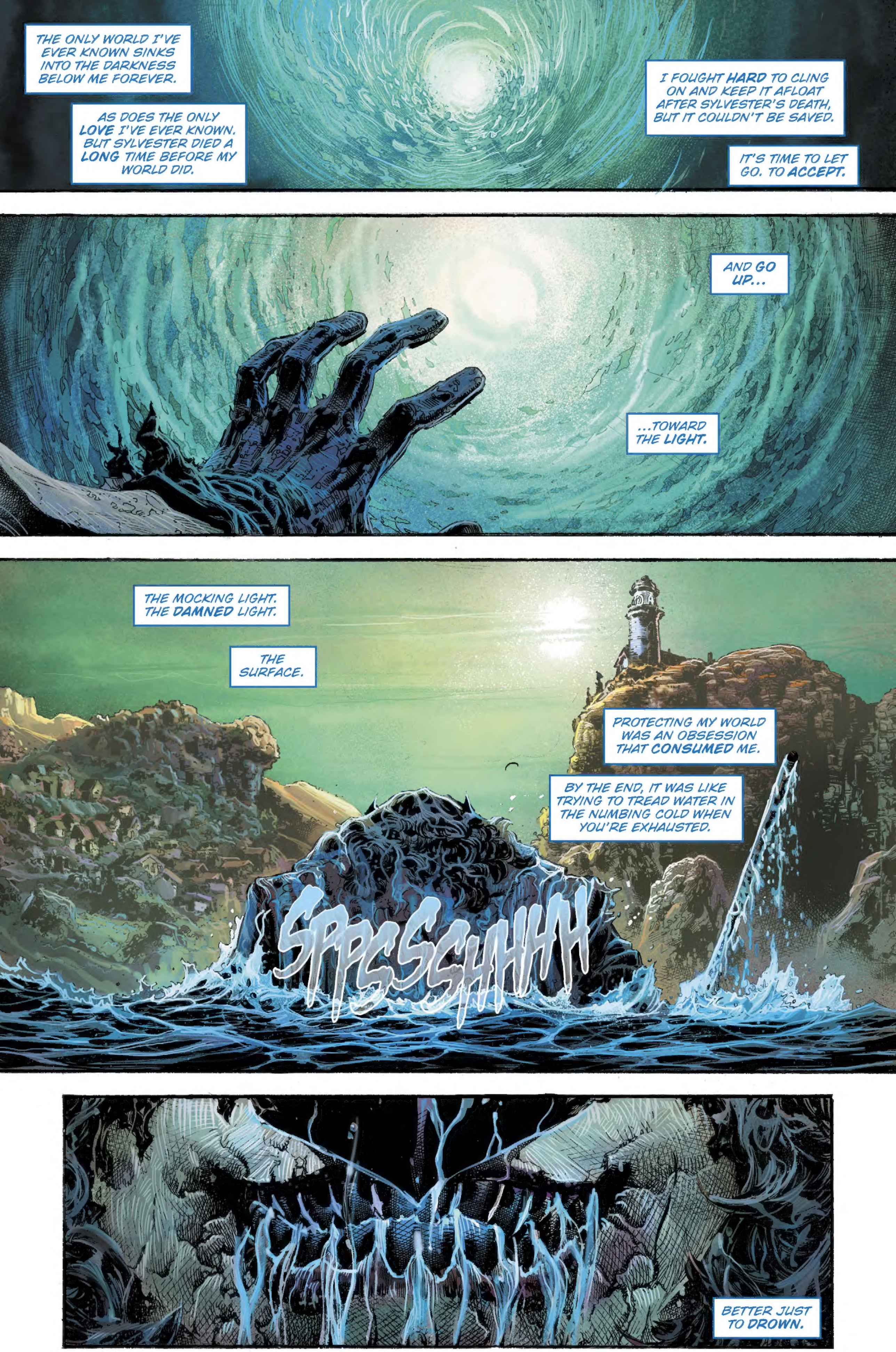
"All those generations of struggle, what purpose did they achieve?"

DR. MANHATTAN

A TWELVE-ISSUE DELUXE SERIES

GEOFF JOHNS • GARY FRANK
BRAD ANDERSON

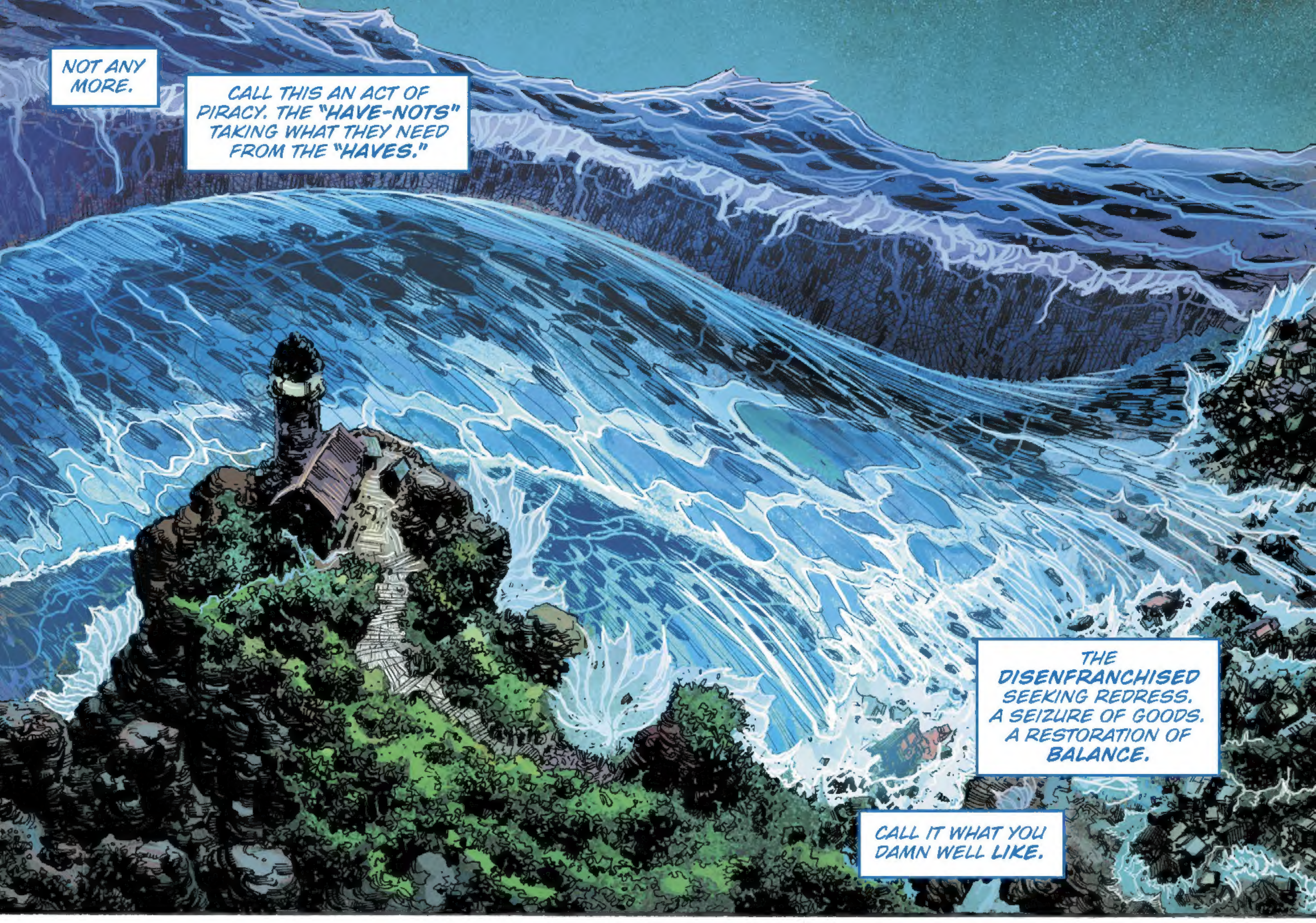
TM & © DC Comics.


THE ONLY WORLD I'VE EVER KNOWN SINKS INTO THE DARKNESS BELOW ME FOREVER.
AS DOES THE ONLY LOVE I'VE EVER KNOWN. BUT SYLVESTER DIED A LONG TIME BEFORE MY WORLD DID.
I FOUGHT HARD TO CLING ON AND KEEP IT AFLOAT AFTER SYLVESTER'S DEATH, BUT IT COULDN'T BE SAVED.
IT'S TIME TO LET GO. TO ACCEPT.
AND GO UP...
...TOWARD THE LIGHT.
THE MOCKING LIGHT. THE DAMNED LIGHT.
THE SURFACE.
PROTECTING MY WORLD WAS AN OBSESSION THAT CONSUMED ME.
BY THE END, IT WAS LIKE TRYING TO TREAD WATER IN THE NUMBING COLD WHEN YOU'RE EXHAUSTED.
SPPSSHHH
BETTER JUST TO DROWN.

DROWN IT ALL.
GRAAAAHHHH
THE LIGHT HURTS MY EYES. I'M NOT USED TO IT.
I HATE THE LIGHT. IT'S TO BLAME FOR EVERYTHING.
I USED TO THINK THAT SYLVESTER HAD GONE UP INTO THE LIGHT.
STUPID.
NAIVE.
MY LOVE ISN'T HERE AND THIS ISN'T A BETTER PLACE.
THE ONE WHO LAUGHS TOLD ME THIS TOWN IS CALLED AMNESTY BAY.
AMNESTY. A CLEAN SLATE. A CHANCE FOR A DO-OVER...
...A CHANCE TO WASH IT ALL AWAY AND START AGAIN.

MY WORLD WAS NEVER A GOOD PLACE. IT WAS BRUTAL AND CORRUPT.
MY WHOLE LIFE, I FOUGHT TO MAKE IT BETTER--EVEN AFTER THE ROGUE METAS TOOK SYLVESTER KYLE FROM ME.
I THOUGHT IT WAS AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL.
BUT I WAS WASTING MY TIME, BECAUSE MY WORLD COULD NEVER BE REDEEMED.
I KNOW NOW MY EARTH WAS A LOWER-TIER WORLD. MALFORMED AND BROKEN.
ONE OF MANY CURSED TO ROT AND SINK.

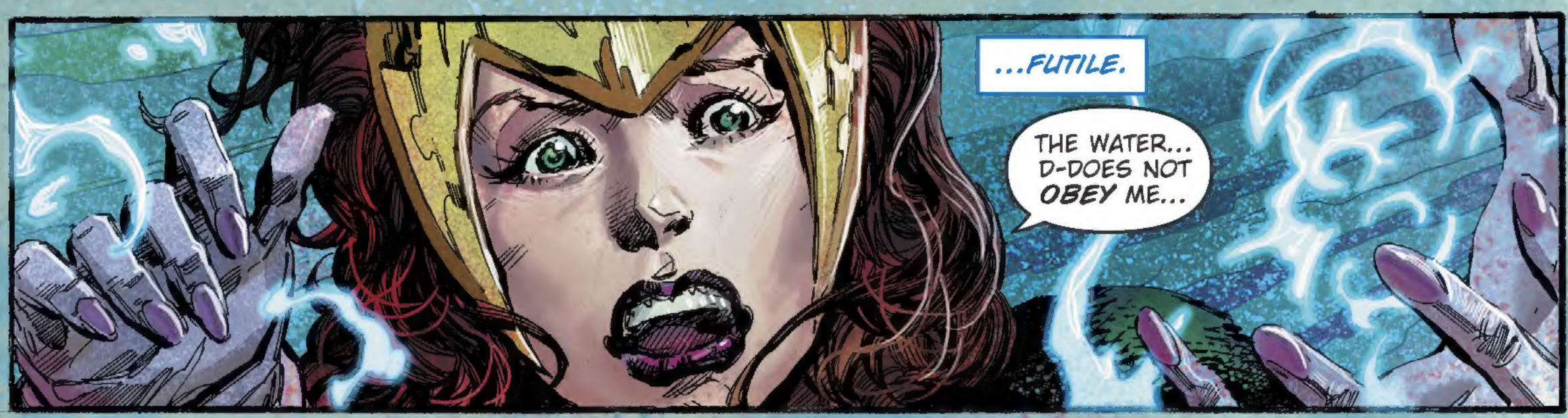
BECAUSE OF THE LIGHT. THE LIGHT UP HERE.
NO WONDER I COULDN'T SAVE IT DESPITE ALL MY SACRIFICES.
THE LIGHT IS WHERE THINGS ARE GOOD AND WHOLE. HERE, LIFE PROSPERS.
AND IT PROSPERS AT THE EXPENSE OF WORLDS IN THE LOWER TIER--LIKE MINE.
WE DECAY AND FALL SO IT CAN LIVE.
WE SUFFER SO IT CAN THRIVE.

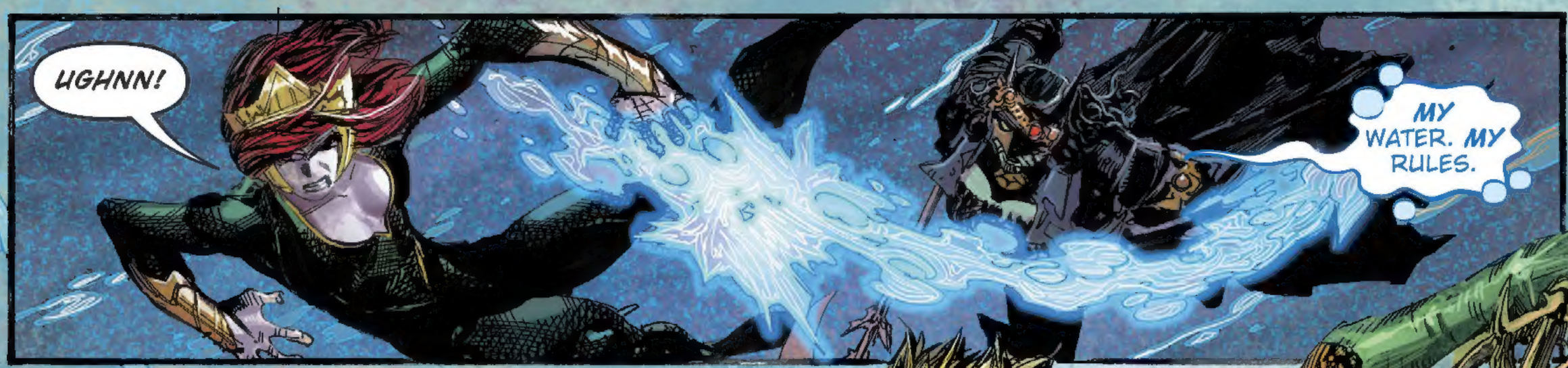

NOT ANY MORE.
CALL THIS AN ACT OF PIRACY. THE "HAVE-NOTS" TAKING WHAT THEY NEED FROM THE "HAVES."
THE DISENFRANCHISED SEEKING REDRESS. A SEIZURE OF GOODS. A RESTORATION OF BALANCE.
CALL IT WHAT YOU DAMN WELL LIKE.

THIS PLACE, THIS LIGHT, THIS AMNESTY BAY, THIS WORLD...
...IT'S WHAT I'M OWED.
MY NAME IS BRYCE WAYNE, AND I'M HERE TO TAKE IT.
PAYMENT IN FULL.
OF COURSE, THERE WILL BE RESISTANCE...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL YOU ARE--

I EXPECTED THAT.
--BUT THIS STOPS NOW.
MERA--
RIGHT BESIDE YOU, ARTHUR.
TAKE THIS MONSTER DOWN!
These are the stories from the Dark Multiverse that should NEVER be...
...Witness the rise of the Dark Knights...
BATMAN THE DROWNED
in Rime of the Ancient Mariner
DAN ABNETT WRITER PHILIP TAN & TYLER KIRKHAM ARTISTS DEAN WHITE & ARIF PRIANTO COLORS
TOM NAPOLITANO LETTERS JASON FABOK AND BRAD ANDERSON COVER
JESSICA CHEN ASSOCIATE EDITOR PAUL KAMINSKI EDITOR EDDIE BERGANZA GROUP EDITOR
SPECIAL THANKS TO SCOTT SNYDER, GREG CAPULLO AND JAMES TYNION IV
BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER

WHY HAVE YOU DONE THIS?
I KNOW WHO HE IS...OR AT LEAST WHO HE MUST BE.
AN AQUAMAN. GENDER ROLES ARE REVERSED HERE.
BUT HE IS SLOW...
WHAT?
KRUNK
WHUNCH
...AND WEAK.
ARTHUR!
AND THIS ONE...WIELDING AQUAKINESIS...





HE COMES FOR ME AGAIN.

HE'S NOT HOLDING BACK.

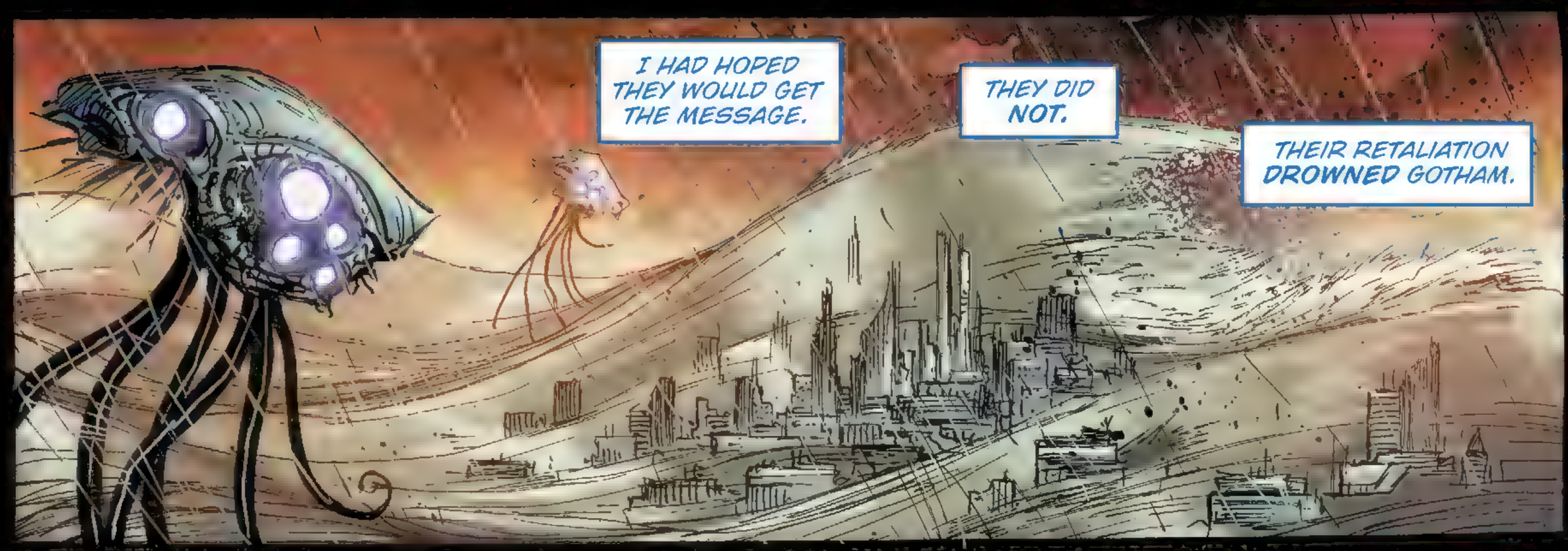
THAT'S FINE.

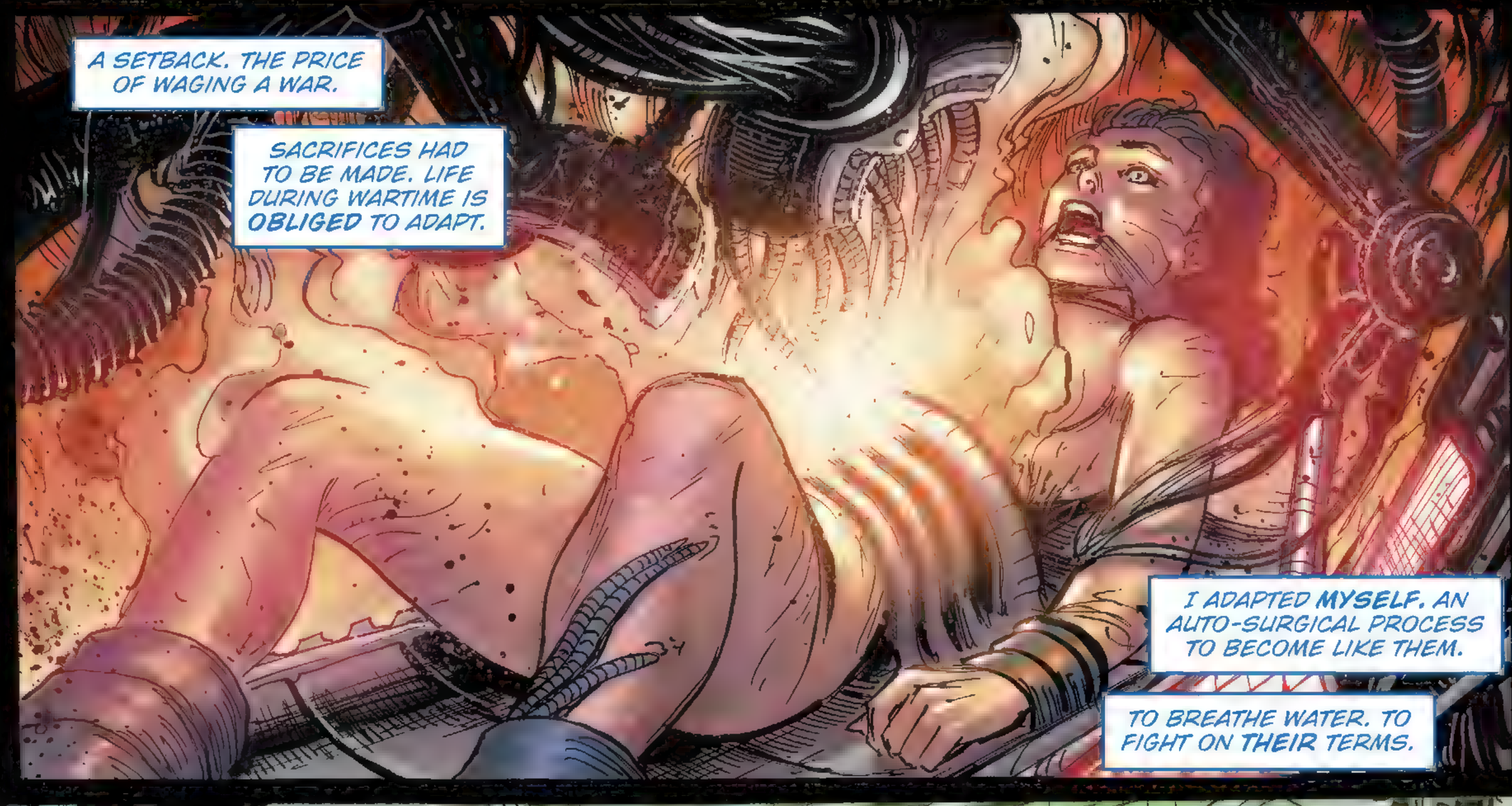
I'VE FOUGHT AND KILLED PLENTY OF ATLANTEANS BEFORE...

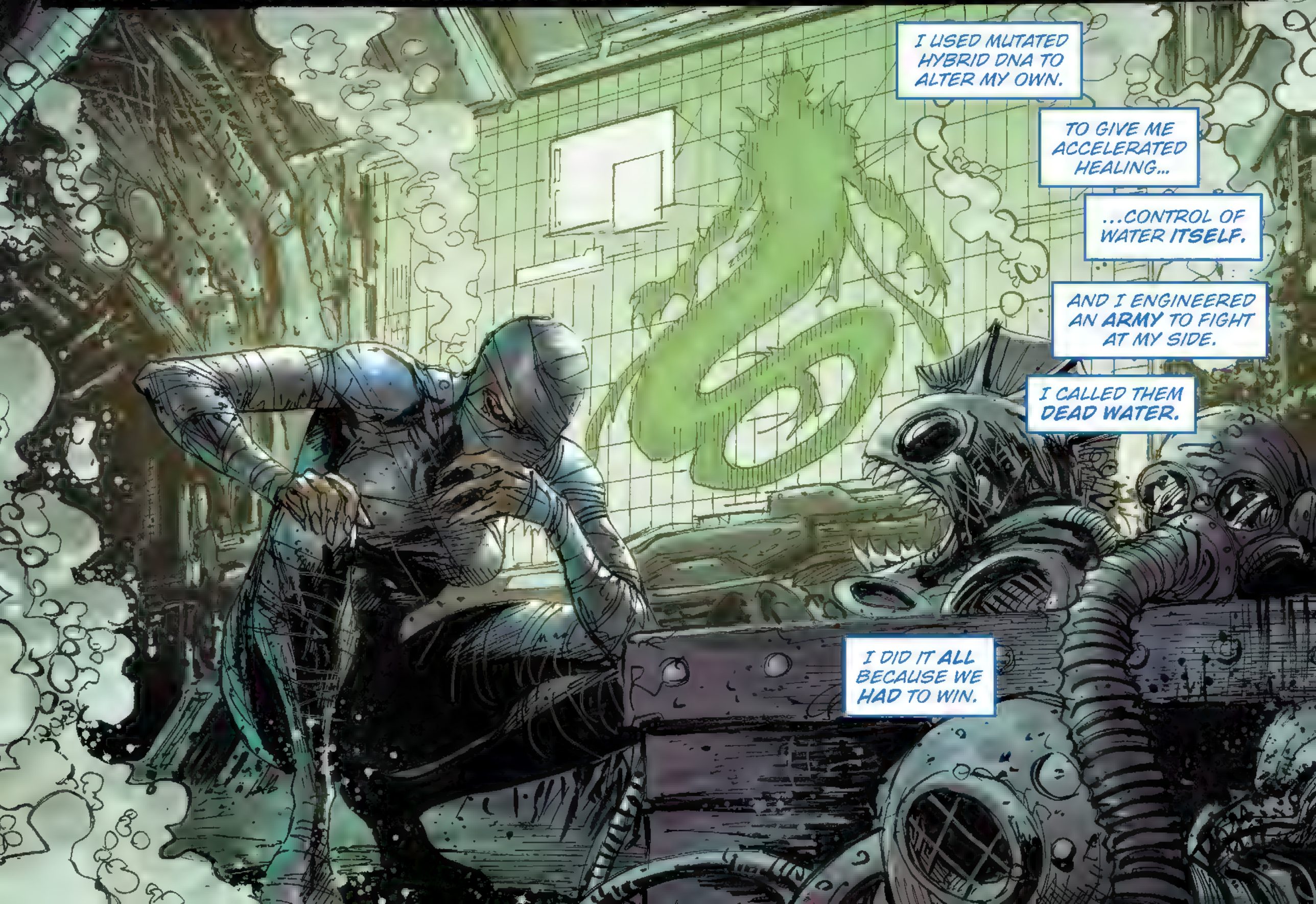
EARTH-11
...SINCE THEY FIRST APPEARED ON MY WORLD, YEARS AGO.
IT WAS EIGHTEEN MONTHS AFTER I'D HUNTED DOWN THE LAST OF THE ROGUE METAS AND AVENGED SYLVESTER.
I THOUGHT I'D FINALLY MADE MY WORLD SAFE.
BUT NO, HERE THEY WERE, LED BY THEIR QUEEN--AQUAWOMAN--EMERGING FROM THE SECRET PLACES OF THE SEA AFTER YEARS OF SELF-IMPOSED EXILE.
CLAIMING THEY CAME IN PEACE.
BUT I KNEW BETTER.
JUST MORE ROGUE METAS. A THREAT THAT MENACES EVERYTHING WE HELD DEAR.
I COULD FEEL IT IN MY GUT.
I DON'T TRUST ANYONE, BUT I TRUST MY GUT INSTINCT.
LIKE I TRUST MY ABILITY TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT.

I HAD NO FAITH IN THE ATLANTEANS' EFFORTS TO SUE FOR PEACE.
SURE ENOUGH, THE "PEACE TALKS" COLLAPSED IN VIOLENCE.
MY GUT WAS RIGHT.
THE ATLANTEANS WERE VICIOUS.
UNTRUSTWORTHY INVADERS. THAT'S WHAT THEY ALL ARE.

SO I REDEFINED VICIOUS FOR THEM.


I HAD HOPED THEY WOULD GET THE MESSAGE.
THEY DID NOT.
THEIR RETALIATION DROWNED GOTHAM.


A SETBACK. THE PRICE OF WAGING A WAR.
SACRIFICES HAD TO BE MADE. LIFE DURING WARTIME IS OBLIGED TO ADAPT.
I ADAPTED MYSELF. AN AUTO-SURGICAL PROCESS TO BECOME LIKE THEM.
TO BREATHE WATER. TO FIGHT ON THEIR TERMS.


I USED MUTATED HYBRID DNA TO ALTER MY OWN.
TO GIVE ME ACCELERATED HEALING...
...CONTROL OF WATER ITSELF.
AND I ENGINEERED AN ARMY TO FIGHT AT MY SIDE.
I CALLED THEM DEAD WATER.
I DID IT ALL BECAUSE WE HAD TO WIN.

AND THANKS TO ME, WE DID.

THE PRICE WAS A NEW WAY OF LIFE FOR THE VICTORS.

A DROWNED WORLD.

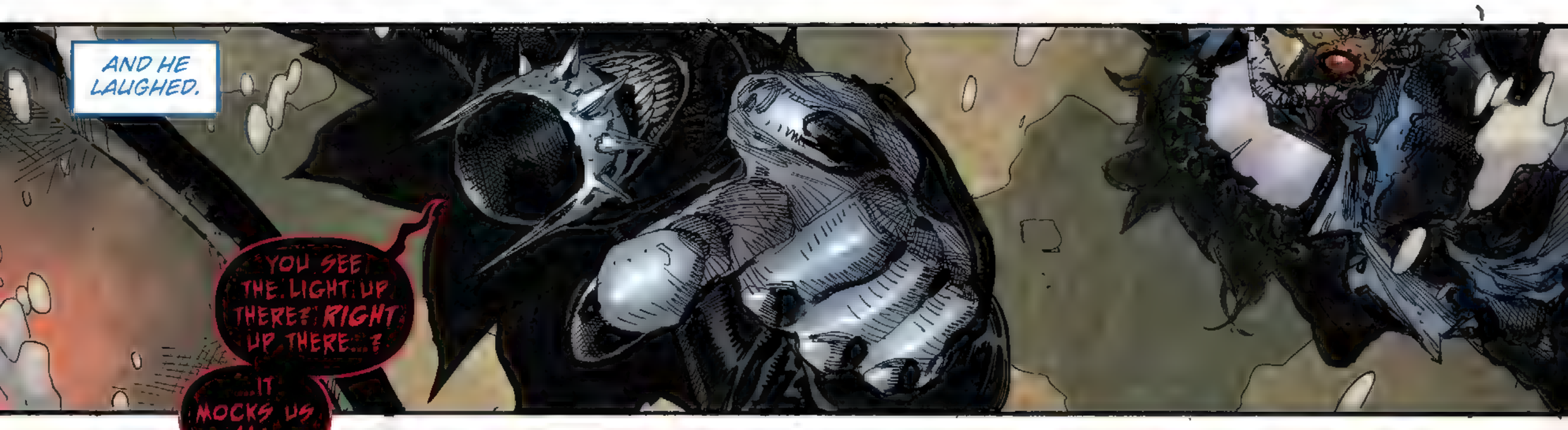
SO I LIT A LAMP TO SHINE OUT ACROSS THE DARKNESS OF THE DEEP.

A LIGHT TO SIGNAL HOPE AND VICTORY.

THE ONLY LIGHT LEFT IN THE WORLD.

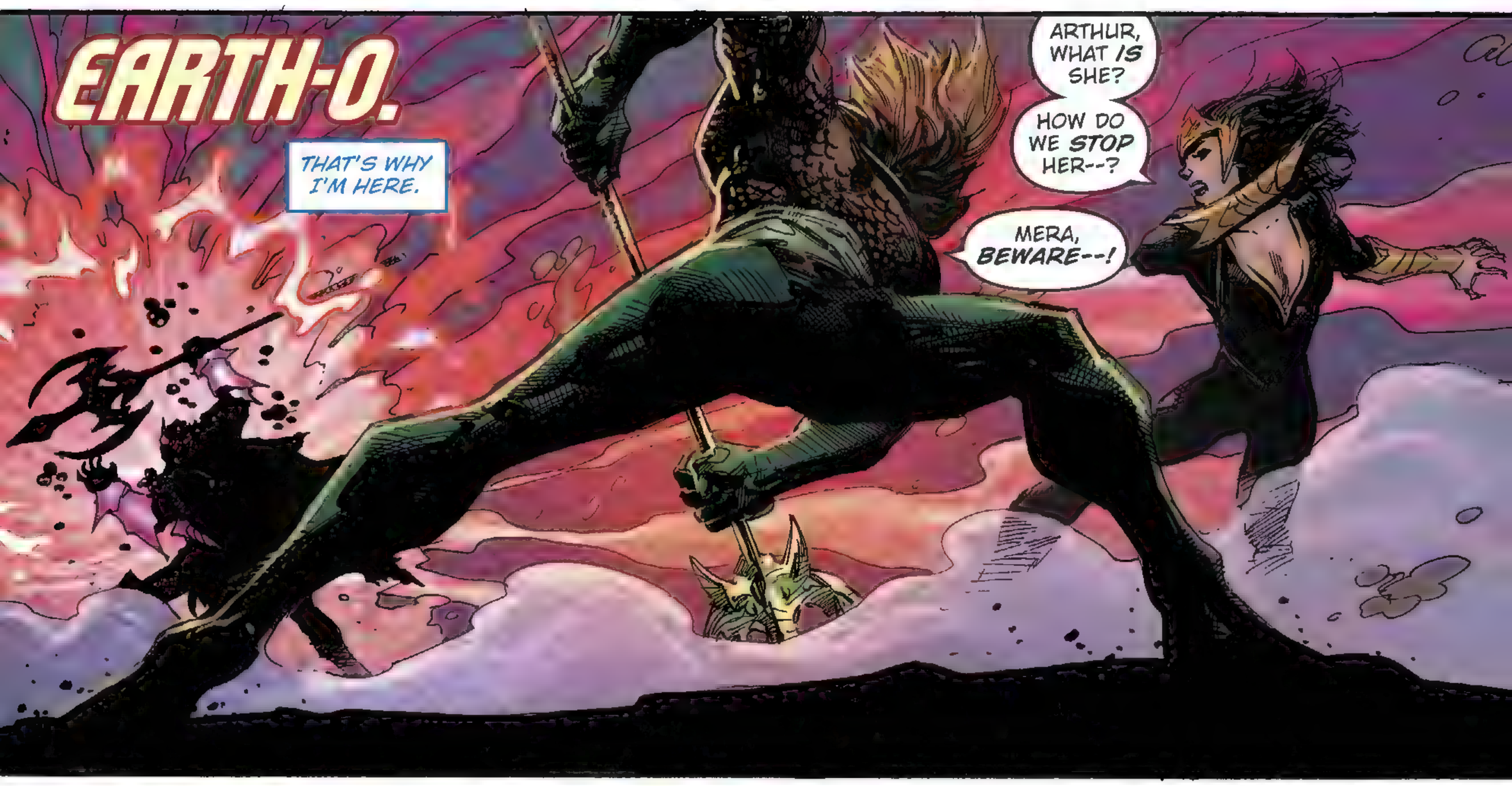
THEN, ONE NIGHT, THE SIGNAL FELL DARK.
I WENT TO REPAIR IT, AND HE WAS WAITING FOR ME...
...THE ONE WHO LAUGHS.
YOU DON'T TRUST ANYTHING, DO YOU, BRYCE?
NOTHING AT ALL.
AND THIS WORLD IS DONE BECAUSE OF IT.
HE WAS RIGHT, I NEVER TRUST ANYTHING OR ANYONE.
BUT I TRUSTED HIM.
THERE WAS SOMETHING IN HIS VOICE. SOMETHING FAMILIAR AND REASSURING.
BUT IT'S NOT REALLY YOUR FAULT.
IT'S THE LIGHT, YOU SEE...

THE LIGHT UP THERE.
AND HE SHOWED IT TO ME.
HE SHOWED ME THE LOWER-TIER WORLDS. THE MINUS REALMS OF THE DARK MULTIVERSE THAT HAD SUFFERED SO THAT THE LIGHT COULD THRIVE.
THE WORLDS AND THE PEOPLES THAT HAD PAID THE PRICE SO THAT THE WORLDS ABOVE US COULD FLOURISH.
AND HE SHOWED ME THE OTHERS LIKE ME.
OUTCAST ITERATIONS. DARK ECHOES OF A MAN WHO HAD TAKEN IT ALL.


AND HE LAUGHED.
YOU SEE THE LIGHT UP THERE? RIGHT UP THERE...?
...IT MOCKS US ALL.
IT'S AN UNSULLIED MULTIVERSE WHERE ALL IS BRIGHT AND ASCENDANT.
IT'S WHY WE SUFFER. IT'S WHY NOTHING CAN EVER BE MADE RIGHT.

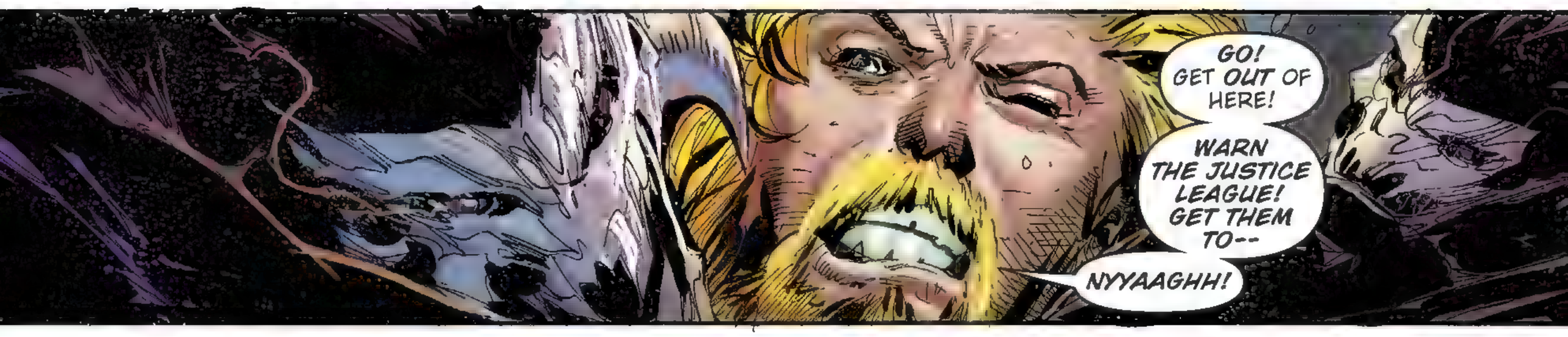
THAT WORLD IS THE PERFECTION YOU DREAM OF.
YOU ARE ITS NIGHTMARE.

"THINK OF DROWNING," HE SAID. "IT'S ACTIVE AND PASSIVE.
"DON'T BE THE VICTIM WHO DROWNS. DON'T SINK WITH THE REST.
"BE ACTIVE. RISE UP... RECLAIM THE LIGHT...
"...AND BE THE ONE WHO DOES THE DROWNING."

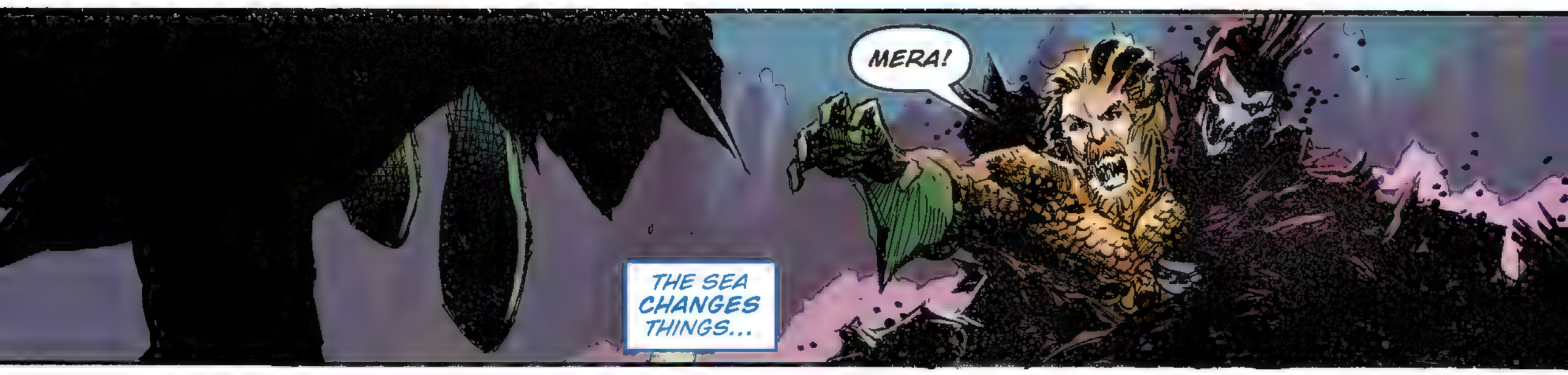

EARTH-0.
THAT'S WHY I'M HERE.
ARTHUR, WHAT IS SHE?
HOW DO WE STOP HER--?
MERA, BEWARE--!

MY WATER. MY RULES.
I OPEN A CONDUIT AND BRING MY ARMY INTO THE LIGHT TO FIGHT AT MY SIDE.

OH GOD! THEY'RE DEAD WATERS!
ARTHUR, AN ARMY OF DEAD WATERS!
AGHNN! MERA! GET BACK!


GO! GET OUT OF HERE!
WARN THE JUSTICE LEAGUE! GET THEM TO--
NYYAAGHH!

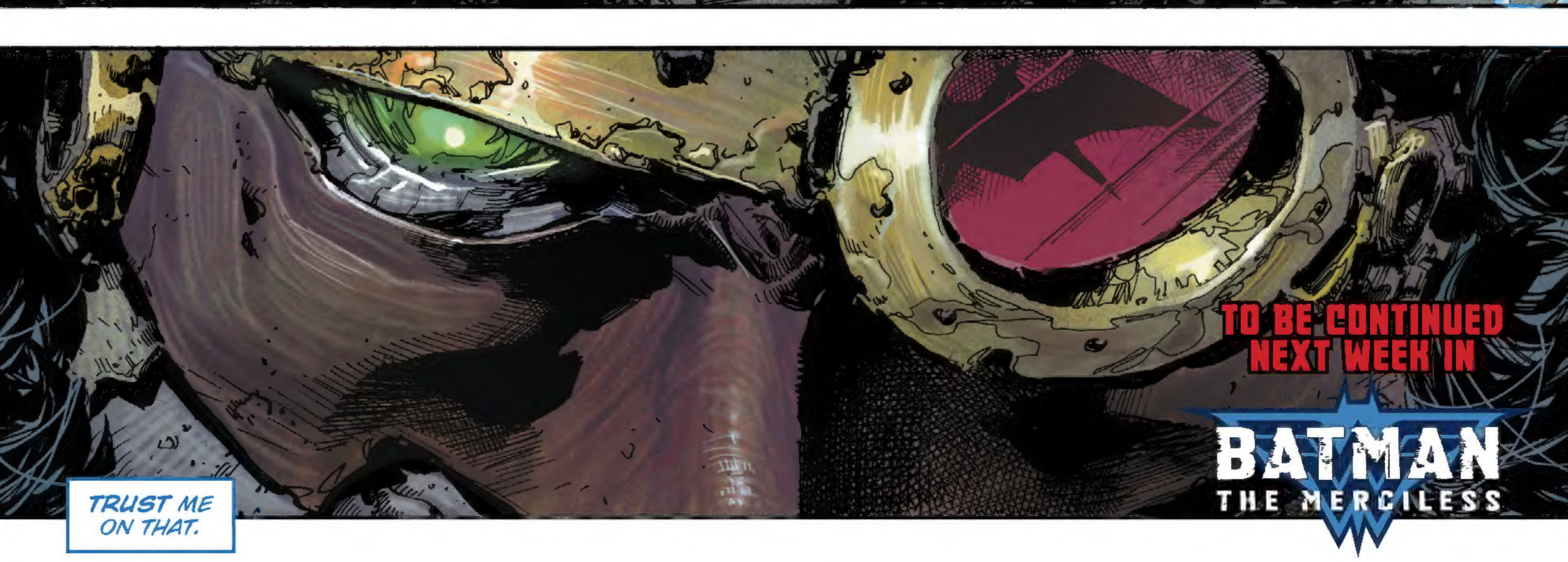
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
GHHKKK!


MERA!
THE SEA CHANGES THINGS...

...YOU CAN'T STOP IT.
MERGE WITH THE DEAD WATER...
...SUCCUMB TO THE INEVITABLE.
THAT'S HOW I MADE MY ARMY. THROUGH THE TRANSMUTING POWER OF THE SEA.
TO TURN THE TIDE OF LOYALTY.
TO DROWN OPPOSITION.
TO MAKE EVEN THE MOST RESISTANT FIGHT FOR ME.
MERA!
HE SCREAMS IN DESPAIR. I KNOW THAT FEELING. TO LOSE THE PERSON YOU LOVE.
HE IS GOING TO BE DEAD IN ANOTHER SECOND, AND THE PAIN WILL CEASE.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HER? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
HOW FORTUNATE. I WISH I HAD DIED A FEW SECONDS AFTER SYLVESTER, SO I COULD HAVE BEEN SPARED THE--

--WHAT IS THIS? MAGIC?
SOME SYMBOL I DON'T RECOGNIZE.
SOMEONE IS INTERVENING.
IT STEALS THE AQUAMAN FROM ME.
IT CHEATS THE DEATH I HAVE ARRANGED.
I WONDER WHERE IT'S TAKEN HIM.
MY SOLACE...HE'S ALIVE, AND WHEREVER HE'S GONE, HE'LL GET TO LIVE THAT PAIN.
UNTIL I FIND HIM AGAIN.

MY AMNESTY BEGINS HERE.
I LIGHT MY SIGNAL.
MY LIGHT...TO SHOW THIS WORLD MY INTENT...
...I'M GOING TO DROWN IT ALL.
THIS WHOLE WORLD.


TRUST ME ON THAT.
TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK IN
BATMAN
THE MERCILESS

BATMAN

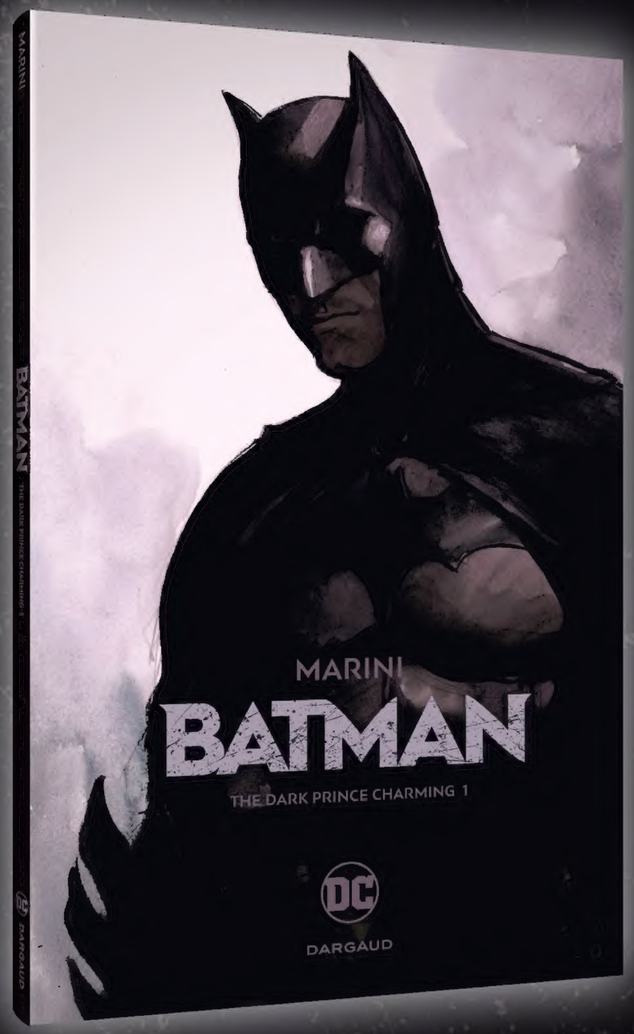
THE DARK PRINCE CHARMING

DC LOGO, BATMAN and all related characters and elements © & ™ DC Comics.

Acclaimed European comics master

ENRICO MARINI

presents a new vision of Gotham!



PART 1 OF A TWO-VOLUME GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES
AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

Part 2 coming in Spring 2018

DC

DARGAUD

JUSTICE LEAGUE
in theaters **NOVEMBER 17**

A DC ALL ACCESS INTERVIEW WITH

JASON MOMOA

Who is Aquaman?
Aquaman is Arthur Curry, a rebel outlaw on the fringes of society who has just been hiding. He has always hung out with the riffraff and the dredges as a kind of outcast. When we find him, it's in a place where the villagers actually like him. They respect him because he can bring in food and wants to help people. Many of them think of him as a god, but he doesn't feel that way about himself. His human side won't let him.

How long has did it take to establish the look of Aquaman?
Zack [director Zack Snyder] had the idea to put the tattoos everywhere and everyone wanted him to have a little bit of blonde in the hair. I just wanted him to have the Van Gogh green-colored eyes, where you can kind of get lost in them. You're scared by it, but you're drawn in. We put the contacts in, and I was like, wow. It's kind of scary, but hopefully not *too* scary.

Talk about the costume, what makes it YOUR costume?
Our costume designer, Michael Wilkinson, is just unbelievable. As far as the armor, it's just gold and green and about 40 pounds of rubber. I don't know what it's made out of, really, but it's heavy; it looks good; you put it on and just sink right into the character.

You've said before that, for you, there was a connection between him as a character feeling between two worlds and how you grew up, being Hawaiian and land-locked in the middle of the country.
There's a lot I could identify with because I was born in Hawaii and then raised in Iowa, which made me feel like an outcast. Aquaman's half and half. He was not accepted in Atlantis, but also doesn't fit in with the surface world. So, he lives in those tides. He's very defiant and a loner until he meets the team and it becomes this little family.

DON'T MISS
JUSTICE LEAGUE DAY ON **11/18/17**
Visit **dccomics.com/JLday** for more details!

DC COMICS BOB HARRAS Senior VP – Editor-in-Chief, DC Comics PAT McCALLUM Executive Editor, DC Comics DIANE NELSON President DAN DiDIO Publisher JIM LEE Publisher GEOFF JOHNS President & Chief Creative Officer AMIT DESAI Executive VP – Business & Marketing Strategy, Direct to Consumer & Global Franchise Management SAM ADES Senior VP & General Manager, Digital Services BOBBIE CHASE VP & Executive Editor, Young Reader & Talent Development MARK CHIARELLO Senior VP – Art, Design & Collected Editions JOHN CUNNINGHAM Senior VP – Sales & Trade Marketing ANNE DePIES Senior VP – Business Strategy, Finance & Administration DON FALLETTI VP – Manufacturing Operations LAWRENCE GANEM VP – Editorial Administration & Talent Relations ALISON GILL Senior VP – Manufacturing & Operations HANK KANALZ Senior VP – Editorial Strategy & Administration JAY KOGAN VP – Legal Affairs JACK MAHAN VP – Business Affairs NICK J. NAPOLITANO VP – Manufacturing Administration EDDIE SCANNELL VP – Consumer Marketing COURTNEY SIMMONS Senior VP – Publicity & Communications JIM (SKI) SOKOLOWSKI VP – Comic Book Specialty Sales & Trade Marketing NANCY SPEARS VP – Mass, Book, Digital Sales & Trade Marketing MICHELE R. WELLS VP – Content Strategy

BATMAN: THE DROWNED 1. December, 2017. Published by DC Comics, 2900 W. Alameda Avenue, Burbank, CA 91505. GST # is R125921072. Copyright © 2017 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof and related elements are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. DC Comics does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories or artwork. For Advertising and Custom Publishing contact dccomicsadvertising@dccomics.com. For details on DC Comics Ratings, visit dccomics.com/go/ratings.

ZONE